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CONTENTS.

		Page.
1.	Wayside Gatherings ..	Front
2.	Notes o the Month ..	617
3.	Th Call of the Preacher ..	619
4.	The Final Decision of Toc H..	619
5.	Ulster Unitarian Christian Association	621
6.	The Home	621
7.	Sunday School—Lectures for Teachers	622
8.	Reports	625

Wayside Gatherings.

In Fleet Street.

"There is more joy in Fleet Street over one Parliamentarian who insults the Speaker than over ninety and nine honourable members who are in no need of being suspended."—Sir John Simon, M.P.

* *

"Varieties of Religious Experience."

"To many honest communicants, Dean Inge can never be anything but an incomprehensibly learned man, nor the Copernican astronomy anything but a far-fetched and perverted contradiction of the obvious fact, confirmed by Holy Scripture, that the earth is flat . . . . . At the other end of the scale are people keenly interested in modern physics and biology who would be sheep without a shepherd if Dean Inge and Bishop Barnes were supplanted by a couple of Idaho farmers in shovel hats. At other radial extremes we have the Ritualist temperament which responds only to what the Dean calls a perpetual serenading of the Almighty, and the Quaker temperament which has to set its teeth to endure the Dean's gaiters or the sight of a steeple."

—George Bernard Shaw.

* *

The Bible.

Presiding at the Annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Mr. Stanley Baldwin said: "I feel that the Bible should have the opportunity of speaking its message in common with all other literature. In the man or woman who reads the Bible a transfiguration occurs, and what is Jewish or Greek, or Oriental, falls away and there emerges, and must emerge, the universal appeal to mankind of the personality of our Lord."

* *

Rev. T. Rhondda Williams.

Our congratulations to Rev. T. Rhondda Williams on his election to the chair of the Congregational Union for 1929-30. Returning thanks to the Assembly for the honour Mr. Williams said "I have shed none of my heresies, only they do not happen to be heresies now. I hope I may take my election, not as an endorsement of any views of mine, but as an endorsement of the attitude I have taken all my life—that the congregational minister must be free to think and to preach; that young ministers need not play tricks with their own souls."

* *

A Six-foot Religion.

Rev. F. W. Boreham, the minister-essayist, preaching recently at The City Temple, London, said: "A six-foot religion is of no use to anybody. A man must have a religion that dominates, controls, orders and commands his life. A six-foot religion—a religion of my own size that I can patronize, that I can confront on equal terms—is not only useless: it is worse than useless. To see life steadily and see it whole, I must look up to something that reaches out into the infinite and immensities and eternities. It is good for a man to have a vast appreciation of the magnitude of his own personality; it is also good for a man to aspire to something beyond the limits of his own theories."

* *

Washington's Farewell Address.

"James," said a teacher to her pupil, "What was George Washington's farewell address?" James, who had not been paying attention to the lesson, replied, "please ma'am, heaven!" —A. W.

Notes of the Month.

The Association Meetings.

The significance of the Ulster Unitarian Christian Association merits attention from those members of our Churches who are concerned for the spread of Christianity in its most simple and intelligible form, unadulterated by dogmatic tests. This is said advisedly in as much as Unitarian Christianity insists not on any dogmatic statement of any kind, but rather emphasises the spirit of life, free from assertive exclusiveness, as it is found in the life and work of its founder, Jesus Christ, our Master. The Committee and the interested members of the Association are to be congratulated whole-heartedly on their devotion to the principles of Christianity as our Churches have always understood the gospel of Jesus Christ. The practical religion thus inculcated by the Association deserves the enthusiastic adherence and loyal co-operation of all our Church members. Unitarian Christianity continues still to be the most misunderstood and misrepresented of all forms of religious faith. However much competent exponents define and explain the purport of Unitarian Christianity, persistent efforts are being made in the religious world to regard it as inimical to faith and the gospel of Christ. All Unitarians, or adherents of our churches, may be properly described as Non-Subscribers to statements of belief petrified into systems of faith from which there can be no appeal ; yet their faith as ' modernists ' is religious conviction adapted to increasing knowledge and the needs of our times.

Were it a fact that the Association insisted on Unitarian Christianity for the sake of purely dogmatic statements, there would be less reason for its existence ; but the present members believe that the idea in the minds of its founders was insistence on an undogmatic Christianity, namely, the free spirit of the gospel of the man Christ Jesus. And is not this the position to which modernists in the Christian Church are approaching ? It may be said that modernists believe in the Divinity of our Lord, and most of them believe also in the divinity of life, wherever that is to be found ; and this is equally true of Unitarian Christians. Divinity can no longer be confined to specially endowed personalities, but is diffused abroad over human life wherever a divine breath is blown upon it. This, briefly stated, is the position with regard to religious truth as understood by aspiring minds in the Christian world to-day.

Our Non-Subscribing position in the religious world has been mistaken to mean that we have little or no faith in the distinctive Christian principles in as much as we have all along distrusted formulae of faith superimposed on the Christian Church. It is getting increasingly urgent to proclaim, with no uncertain sound, the verities of faith as we have received them from the life and spirit of Christ who insisted that the truth shall make us free. And is not this the great need the whole Christian world is hungering for to-day ? to discover a spirit of life that shall not be in glaring contrast with the intentions of him who uttered the sublime idea, " And I, if I be lifted up, from the earth, will draw all men to myself."

We take it that in this spirit the small band engaged in upholding the banner of Spiritual Christianity is carrying on its activities. It is in some respect an onerous duty, for the trend of things is in the direction of a breakdown of old traditions. As the " Inquirer " of May 12 suggests, " the Christian Church has evidently lost the commanding position it once held. The former Queen of Sciences occupies in our time quite a modest place in the world of thought," and the writer concludes that " in human affairs to-day the supreme need is for intelligent guidance in moral perlexities and for this men look to the Church." Assuming this to be an accurate account of the position with regard to moral leadership is it too much to expect that our leaders, both ministerial and lay, should rally to the support of spiritual Christianity and assume the role of moral leadership of which the whole Christian Church appears to be sadly in need ? A speaker at the Annual Meeting of the Association on May 7th, deplored the absence of so many, in fact the majority of the ministers. The lay element were rather better represented on the occasion ; but the men we are accustomed to count on as capable of leadership and occupying conspicuous positions were, as generally happens, conspicuously absent. We would earnestly appeal for more devoted service on behalf of spiritual Christianity that moral leadership may not altogether vanish from among our group of Churches

The arrangements for the Synod and other Meetings on Tuesday 19th and Wednesday 20th of June are as follows :

Tuesday, 19th June—

4-30 p.m.—Annual Meeting of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster.

6 p.m.—Tea in Central Hall.

8 p.m.—Divine Service in First Presbyterian Church, Belfast.

Wednesday, 20th June—

11-0 a.m.—Communion Service in First Presbyterian Church, Belfast.

11-30—Business Meeting of General Synod

5-30 p.m.—Annual Dinner.

7-30 p.m.—Lecture in First Presbyterian Church, Belfast, by Rev. W. C. Hill, M.A. (Southport)—"The Revision of Christian Theology."

The meetings are open to the members of our Church who will receive a hearty welcome. It is hoped that there will be a large and representative attendance of both ministers and laity at these meetings.

D. J. WILLIAMS, Moderator.
GEO. J. SLIPPER, Clerk.

The Churches' Opportunity.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England held its Annual Meetings in London on May 18th. Our readers may be interested in the views of the new Moderator, who is the Professor of Church History in the Presbyterian College, Cambridge—on the freedom of the age. Dr. Carnegie Simpson, taking as the subject of his address, "Moral Freedom and the Gospel," said that despite all the materialism and paganism and pleasure-lust around us there were unmistakable signs that very many people—he spoke neither of the professed religions on the one hand nor of the utterly worldly on the other—were increasingly conscious that we were not reaching either individual happiness or social security, and further that we would not find either of these in the bastard freedom which asserted itself in many of our plays and novels and in so much of our modern life—a bastard freedom which knew no commandments but the negation of the seventh, and which was without faith, not only in God, but also in man and in woman.

The Scientist's Facts.

He had only time to remark how the Churches should meet this spirit of intellectual freedom in our age. One was that they must show themselves more hospitable to all facts. They had not always been this. How inhospitable—to take but one example—the Church mind was to the new facts about which the world and about history associated with evolution.

That attitude, futile at all times, was to-day fatal. It was moreover, unbelieving as orthodoxy had often been. For "all facts are God-facts." The facts which the scientist found in nature were as truly God-facts as were those which the theologian found in the Bible. No man was a wholly believing man, and no Church was a wholly believing Church, that could not say that. He thought that in the Presbyterian Church they had learned this lesson, and that to-day there was, especially among their younger ministers, a real honesty and frankness of mind in dealing with all truth.

But the Christian ministry as a whole had not yet won from the intelligent hearing of to-day that reputation for saying a thing for no other reason than that it was true, which men of science had and which none should more indisputably take than those who spoke in the name of Him, who, as Tertullian well said, called Himself not tradition but Truth.

The Christianity they must present to day must stand on Christ and not on any-secondary and disputable props. And a Christianity standing thus need not fear the intellectual freedom of this or of any age. Rather did that intellectual freedom give to a Church which was fair with facts and honest with convictions its chance.

O God ! in every temple I see people that see
Thee, and in every language I hear spoken people praise Thee.
Polytheism and Islam feel after Thee.
Each religion says : "Thou art One, without equal."
If it be a mosque people murmur the holy prayer,
And if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love to Thee.
Sometimes, I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque.
But it is Thou Whom I search from temple to temple.
Thy elect have no dealings with either heresy or orthodoxy ;
For neither of them stands behind the screen of Thy Truth.
Heresy to the heretic and religion to the orthodox.
But the dust of the rose petal belongs to the heart of the perfume seller.

(An inscription by Abul Fazl for a Temple in Kashmir).

"The Call of the Preacher."

THE LINDSEY PRESS—1s. and 1/6d.

There is a very helpful and suggestive little book of 40 pages, entitled, "The Call of the Lay Preacher," recently published by The Lindsey Press. It gets its title from the first chapter which is by my friend, Mr. H. G. Chancellor, then follow chapters on the training of lay preachers, women, and the work of the lay preacher, books and preachers, organisation and aims. How the lay preacher can help the ministry, and some ideals difficult of attainment by various ministers and lay workers. I have read scores of books on preaching, but have enjoyed reading and pondering this small volume immensely, and with the exception of Dr. Shedd's masterly book entitled, "Homiletics and Pastoral Theology," which is perhaps the ablest book on preaching extant, we have felt the "Call of the Lay Preacher," is a call from the ideal to a life of ideal realisation. Emerson says, "people are born with the moral or with the material bias," and Mr. Chancellor re-affirms those prophetic words when he says, "The vital qualification for preaching religion is to possess it, and without that no man should enter a pulpit to conduct public worship—a sense of vocation is essential.

The chapter that interested me most, was the short, but very interesting chapter on "Books and Preachers" by the able manager of the Essex Hall Book Room, Rev. Charles Biggins. He says: "The secret of successful preparation is study and the tools for study are books. The past had its inspired books, which to our loss, we ignore." Protestantism was based on one infalliable Book—the worship of the Bible. It is now becoming plain that historical Protestantism has no longer a raison d'être between pure liberty and pure authority. The sense of a book must be, either the ideas of the writer, or those of the reader, either those which suggested the words, or those which the words suggest. To get at the former when the author is gone is clearly impossible; the thoughts of John, and Peter and Paul at the moments when they wrote their works are beyond our reach. The sense of Scripture, then, denotes your sense, the ideas which it awakens in your mind. There is a prevailing notion that in the interpretation of the Bible there is very little for the understanding to do, that he who runs may read. Whence comes the diversity of interpretation, if the Bible is so easy to understand? In truth, the Scriptures are a collection of writings singularly difficult to understand, whose true meaning has proved more inaccessible than that of any other ancient book, and which requires further elucidation of history and strenuous exercise of judgment in our search for Truth.

Again, Mr. Biggins says—"Our day has its inspired books, and how much these books are inspired only they know who have seen the souls of the writers through the magic of the printed page, and, seeing, have understood how close is God to man, and man to God in this seeming cynical, critical and materialistic age." There never was a time when the difficulties in the way of making an efficient use of books were greater than they are to-day, when it was practically so troublesome to find out that which it is of vital importance to know. It needs a strong character and a resolute system of reading to keep the head cool in the storm of literature around us. Perhaps the most useful help to general reading is to know what we should not read, what we can keep out from that small cleared spot in the overgrown jungle of information, the corner which we can call our ordered patch of fruit-bearing knowledge, so as to choose the best, the eternal, the indispensable books for each of us.

Space forbids me from enlarging on the other chapters, especially on the closing one on 'some ideals difficult of attainment' which would be well worthy of an article to itself. 'The Call of the lay Preacher' is beyond question very suggestive and well worth reading and pondering over.

—G. V. C.

The Final Decision of Toc H.

The Doxology, like many other Christian passages, embodying high and noble sentiments, has often been abused but one c n not help wondering if it was ever used on a more inappropriate occasion than the occasion of the annual meeting of the Council of Toc H, which confirmed the policy adopted in the matter of the non-appointment of Unitarian ministers as padres.

A group of men at the head of a large organisation with Brotherhood and Service

as its watchwords, pass a resolution excluding from office certain ministers of religion, whose bearing and conduct are not questioned for one moment, and having passed the resolution with only four dissentients, sing 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow'?

One wonders what the feelings of the Founder of Christianity would have been if He could have stood in the midst of this Council. Jesus, the friend of publicans and sinners, mixing freely with the poor and the despised, never for one moment thinking of excluding anyone, not even the thieves' on the cross, whose religion of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man was wide and deep enough to take in every human being on the earth—listening to some of his followers excluding from the body all who differ from them on certain questions of doctrine?

What a subject this would make for a painting if only some genius could be found to depict it faithfully on canvas? The picture might be called 'Jesus crucified afresh.'

The explanations given by Toc H in defence of its action are altogether unworthy of such a splendid movement. First there is the statement that Unitarians are not Christians. It is unnecessary to discuss the truth or untruth of this statement. Sufficient to say that if a Christian is one who tries to follow the teaching of Jesus as it is given in the New Testament, then a Unitarian has, to say the least of it, as much right as anyone to the title.

Realising its mistake, Toc H then issues a circular stating that it never intended to imply that Unitarians are not Christians and gives a new reason for excluding them. The new explanation is that the Toc H constitution demands the exclusion of Unitarians. A close examination of the Constitution from a strictly legal point of view shows that the new excuse is no better than the old one. Legally speaking, a Unitarian is a Christian. In the year 1899 a legal decision in the High Court of Justice ruled that Unitarians are Christians.

These two explanations have been allowed to fall gradually into the background, and there is now a third explanation in the field. It is that Unitarians do not believe in the Incarnation and therefore cannot be accepted as members of a Christian organisation.

This is partly true. A Unitarian does not believe in the Incarnation but the idea that this precludes him from being a Christian is too fantastic to merit serious consideration. The Incarnation is not a peculiarly and distinctively Christian doctrine. Stories of a miraculous birth gather round nearly all the great founders of religions. Indeed there are only three great founders of religions for whom a miraculous birth is not claimed, Moses, Confucius and Mohammed.

A Unitarian does not believe that Jesus was miraculously born any more than he believes that Buddha, Zoroaster, Lao-Tsze, Pythagoras, Plato and a host of others were miraculously born, in spite of the claims made on their behalf by enthusiastic followers.

However, Toc H has a perfect right to demand belief in the Incarnation, even though there is no more evidence in the case of Jesus than there is in the case of other great religious leaders, but if it intends to exclude all who do not believe it, it must exclude many others besides Unitarians.

It is rather unfortunate that this doctrinal test has been discovered at this late date. It was unknown twelve years ago when the movement was formed. The words 'without rank and without creed' suggest the very opposite of a doctrinal test. It was unknown in 1925, the date of the Charter stating that padres must be duly 'qualified priests or ministers of religion of any denomination' and it was unknown in 1926 when the January issue of the Toc H Journal stated that 'there never can be at the gate of Toc H either a doctrinal test or a test of spiritual attainment.' In 1928, however, it is suddenly discovered than no man can be a member of Toc H unless he believes in the Incarnation.

One can only hope that wise counsels will prevail and that Toc H will remove the sectarian label which it has recently adopted. It is not likely that the liberal religious men already within the movement will agree to having certain religious doctrines imposed upon them by an Anglican executive anxious to propagate its particular theological views.

It is to be hoped that Toc H will take down the new notice erected over its portals 'No admittance for Unitarians, Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists or any other religious people who do not believe in the

Incarnation' and put up the old notice once again, 'We welcome all who accept the great principles of Brotherhood and Service.'

(Summary of sermon p eached in All Souls' Church, Elmwood Avenue, on Sunday evening, May 6th, 1928, by the Rev. Sydney P. Whitehouse).

Ulster Unitarian Christian Association.

The annual sermons on behalf of the above Association were preached in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast, on Sunday, May 6, by the Rev. Albert Whitford, of Moneyrea, who chose as his subject at morning service, 'The Christian Armour,' and at the evening service, 'Modernism v. Conservatism.'

On Monday evening, May 7, the 52nd annual meeting of subscribers and friends of the Association was held in the Central Hall, Belfast, the Moderator of the Non-subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland (Rev. D. J. Williams) presiding. There was a representative attendance. Tea was served prior to the meeting under the supervision of Miss M'Caw and Miss N. M'Kisack.

The Report of Committee and statement of accounts were presented by the acting secretary and treasurer, the Rev. G. J. Slipper, in which reference was made to the steady demand for literature, and the desire of the Committee to undertake more definite missionary work. The Hon. Secretary, Mr. Chas. J. M'Kisack, had, through business reasons, to relinquish the post during the year, but had consented to remain a member of Committee.

In moving the adoption of the report and accounts from the chair, he said it was to be hoped that they had heard the last of the divergence of aim as betw en Unitarian Christianity and the principles of non subscription. Unitarian Christianity was the practical exemplification of the broad principles of Christ; Non-subscription was the with-holding of assent to rigid opinions, onc convincingly held, but which to-day, were petrified into dogma from which it was alleged there could be no appeal.

It was sur ly time, he said, that adherence to non-subscribing principles and the advocacy of Unitarian Christianity should be merged into one fold. In future, the Unita ian Christian Association ought to be regarded as an integral adjunct of the synod of the non-subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. I. the principles for which the Unitarian Christian Association stood were not an integral portion of the non-subscribing Church, then he had no particular interest in advocating a vacuous refusal of assent to other people's opinions.

The Rev. G. B. Cook in seconding, complained that progress of Unitarianism was difficult when so few of the ministers supported the Association. It seemed hard to understand why the non-subscribing Church had so little real conviction that what they called Unitarianism was true.

Mr. C. J. M'Kisack, proposing a vote of thanks to the Rev. A. Whitford (Moneyrea) for giving the annual sermons on Sunday, said some of their younger ministers, in contradistinction to Mr. Whitford, were inclined to treat congregations to philos ophical discussions. His view as a layman was that people went to church to be helped to become better men and women.

M . Whitford, returning thanks, after the motion had been warmly carried, said Dr. Barnes and Dean Inge seemed to think they had got hold of something new in Modernism. All that was rational in Modernism had been taught for generations from Unitarian pulpits.

The following were elected to serve on the Committee: Rev. John Beggs, Mrs. J. Glynne Davies, Mrs. E. R. Jackson, Mr. V. G. Jennings, Rev. J. A. Kelly, Mr. Robert M. Laird, Miss M'Caw (Banbridge), Mr. Charles J. M'Kisack, Mr. Henry J. F. Orr, Mr. Harold Thomas, Rev. A. Whitford, and the Rev. G. J. Slipper (hon secretary and treasurer).

The Rev. J. A. Kelly, in an interesting speech moved the resolution renewing adhesion to the principles and objects of the Association, Mr. Harold Thomas seconding, and it was passed unanimously. The customary votes of thanks brought the proceedings to a close.

The Home.

Charity begins at home, as do all other good things, and as a Church with a gospel of happiness to illuminate life, and alert to give practical bearing to all our teaching, to follow up our preaching with an application, the following scheme for a Conference in India, the principal topic of which is to be "The Home," is surely worthy of our

notice. Each of these heads will be a subject of discussion based on a paper or papers contributed by those, who have consented to address the Conference.

"(1) The Plan of the Home, (a) the arrangement of an existing home, (b) the building of a new home; (2) Health in the Home, including dietetics; (3) Beauty in the Home, including art, furniture, decoration, etc.; (4) Truth in the Home, including the question of understanding fundamental principles of life and guiding the home in their light; (5) Guests in the Home; 6) Music in the Home; (7) Comradeship in the Home—the right attitude of one member of a family to another; (8) Leisure in the Home; (a) Children in the Home, including eugenics, (10) Culture in the Home; (11) Citizenship in the Home—the home as a cell in the civic body and the implications thereof; (12) Servants in the Home, (13) The observance of Social Customs in the Home; (14) The Larger Home and Community Living; (15) Household Economy."

—ULLIN.

Sunday School: Lectures for Teachers.

Thanks to the generosity of the Sunday School Association a grant of £10 was received by the Committee to defray the cost of a series of Lectures on Sunday school teaching. These were held during the spring of this year in Mountpottinger school-room. We were fortunate in securing the services of Mr. J. Durward of Stranmillis Training College whose lectures were very much appreciated by those who were able to attend. There were present representatives from the following schools: Holywood, Comber, Killinchy, York Street, Mountpottinger and Moneyrea.

JOTTINGS FROM THE LECTURE COURSE

Three main topics are involved—Teacher, Lesson and Pupil. Each must be considered if the work is to have effective balance and be as useful as it ought to be.

The ideal **teacher** would appear to require most of the following characteristics:

1. Enthusiasm for his work.
2. Knowledge of his subject.
3. Sympathy—to win confidence and understand the child's point of view.
4. Ready wit, considerable tact and authority on occasion.
5. A public and private life beyond reproach.
6. Personality.
7. Sense of greatness of his task and his responsibility.

Many of these will be seen to be improvable.

The **Lesson** must be carefully read and prepared by the teacher. When presenting it the need for co-operation must not be overlooked. The child must not be passive while teacher does the talking and thinking but should be encouraged actively to develop the topic.

Consideration of Herbart's scheme for the development of a lesson leading to the formulation of a general truth would seem to determine the course of a lesson to be:

(a) Preparation of pupil by questions and otherwise for material to be presented in the next stage. Rousing interest and directing it.

(b) Statement of lesson; aim to secure the co-operation noted above.

(c) Presentation of new material (story, pictures, &c.).

(d) Discussion of material, noting the salient points, instituting comparisons, and finally

(e) General summing-up and some attempt at expression work or application.

General points worthy of notice are that teacher should be brief and his word-pictures striking and vivid. Questions are of great value since they enable teacher to learn how children are following the lesson but such questions must for obvious reasons be distributed fairly. Keep the discussion relevant.

"A thing is not given till it is taken nor a lesson taught till it is learned," so some attention must of necessity be given to the **pupil.**

It is many years since Sir F. Galton first proved experimentally that though the avenues by which sense material was collected were numerous, individuals could be classified according to the sense organ which was by them most profitably employed. Some recollect most easily things they have heard, some things seen and others things felt and handled. Teachers may expect their classes to contain more than one type, so class teaching methods should be influenced by the knowledge of the classification.

Maps and diagrams must be utilised where possible and if the teacher is not too shy to use chalk (and familiarity breeds contempt) a blackboard has inestimable value.

(a) Biographical details and a Time Line, summarise usefully and present visually.

(b) Tabulations make the teacher's preparation more methodical and often bring points out very emphatically.

(c) General summaries of the ground covered are useful when revision is demanded and also for examination preparation. This last, however, should never be an end in itself.

Illustrations may take many forms but care must be exercised in the use of verbal ones. See that the phrase used is more familiar than the one it attempts to explain and simplify. The point of this warning is better appreciated when one considers Professor Adam's classic case of Niagara and the cubic mile of water and the Isle of Wight accommodating the world's population of 1,600,000,000 people.

Why do we have Sunday Schools? A teacher should be in a position to answer.

(a) Essential topics are dealt with which are not elsewhere treated in a manner to suit the child.

(b) A link is early established with the Church and all it means.

(c) Youth and childhood are learning periods and worthy habits are readily acquired—at times unconsciously.

(d) Inculcation of Sunday Observance and a reverence for God and His Desires as expressed in His Word follow regular attendance in most cases.

(e) Pupils may later share the privilege of teaching—leading to a useful study of their own beliefs, of their fellows, and definite work which is likely to enrich their own spiritual life.

Finally—where we stand is the limit to which we can raise our pupils while they are dependent upon us. Is your level high enough?

RE-BIRTH.

Worn as a garment new,
Hiding yourself from view,
Feature and form I saw, but did not know.
Yet at the words you spoke
Deep-sleeping thoughts awoke;
Thus did our hearts unite, our minds conflow.
Haply some ancient page,
Scribed in an earlier age,
Tells of our trystings when a world was young.
So in far years to be,
Again you will come to me,
Singing our old songs in a later tongue.

OLIVER DOUGLAS in "The Observer."

The Passing of the Old Evangelist.

"The World To-day" recently published an article under the above title by "A Presbyterian Minister," whom the Editor announced as a "well-known local divine who has written much on religious and social movements." The article shows that modern Evangelism has become a calculating trade. "Picture the host of modern-day evangelists who are struggling to get 'jobs.' It would be unfair to include the handful of men who have not 'bowed the knee to Baal.' As for the remainder, most of them have no vision of the real needs of to-day, no great passion that causes them to agonise in the small hours of the night. They are preaching sermons that were made twenty or more years ago, using phrases which have become threadbare and meaningless, and depending upon a great machine organisation to get results in 'free-will' offerings." Dr. Arthur T. Pierson, a religious leader of his time, wrote an article under this very heading, reviewing the history of evangelism from the middle of the eighteenth to the end of the nineteenth century. It was a time of great re-action against Christianity, when the Secularist movement was at flood-tide, when Dr. Pierson's article was written, and even in the churches there was a growing disbelief in the Bible and in prayer, and about a dozen preachers with great boldness and courage, became responsible for what is known as "The Revival of the Nineteenth Century." This kind of evangelism, when in the beginning the preachers ventured forth, on their own responsibility, without organisation, or elaborate organisation, or choirs or soloists, or paid advertising, was to be admired. But its place even in his day was being supplanted by a newer form involving great extravagance in cost of maintaining meetings and the huge sums paid to evangelists.

Dwight L. Moody, a shoe-salesman in Boston, carried through the greatest evangelistic campaign ever held. Theologically, a conservative, he possessed broad sympathies, and men like Professor Hy. Drummond and George Adam Smith, who were the targets of bitter attack were invited by Moody to a great Conference in America, and the messages of these two men thrilled the immense audience Moody brought together. In that district, East Northfield, a new Roman Catholic Church was being

built, and Moody presented it with an organ. The Chicago Avenue Church was founded by Moody, and became one of the greatest institutional churches in his city. Because people knew that Moody was not out for money he had their confidence.

Song leaders among evangelists have become wealthy through their royalties on hymn-books. The royalties on the famous Moody and Sankey Hymn Books went to the institution founded by Moody. Moody left only £100, having previously made a modest provision for his widow, which gave her a home in her declining years. Moody himself, however, received a shock when he realised that his vast congregations were really only made up of people who were already habitual churchgoers, and the Superintendent of New York City Mission Society, becoming tired of the constant challenge if only the churches could preach the simple gospel in the slum districts, they would get the crowds and win converts. Moody was invited for a month, and though the church would have seated one thousand, the congregations throughout the series were small. Some of the workers went out into the saloons and asked men drinking at the bar and playing cards to come and hear Moody. The only response was "Who the hell is Moody?"

Times, however, have changed, and however suited Moody might be for his own day and generation, the evangelism that has now taken the place of the old is of a very different type, and animated by very different motives. It seems to be nothing more or less barefaced, impudent imposture, and the more grossly ignorant the evangelist the better does he seem to succeed. The vulgarity of the "big time" evangelists not only in preaching but in public prayer is revolting.

It seems to be the universal method for such adventurers to plant themselves down in a locality and then in the most brutal fashion contemptuously criticise local ministers, for not making the same amount of "converts" that they do. Faithful, hard-working ministers in consequence have found local feeling so much turned against them, that they have been compelled to resign.

The elaborate organisations and the skilled trade of hauling in the money during a mission, is described in the article in detail, and the evangelist does not hesitate

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to scrap an old method and begin a new one Mrs. M'Pherson has recently divided with her mother £120,000 of her earnings as an evangelist after six years endeavour She boasts of going to establish a chain of tabernacles across the United States with electric signs, which will put the theatres in the shade. The article has a picture of Billy Sunday, the converted "base-ball player," in a very energetic attitude. During the coming year, visitation evangelism is to be the order of the day, and thousands of door-bells will be ringing. It behoves the churches to be alert, and to frustrate the methods of these arrivals from nowhere by calling up their own resources, and being awake to the needs of the present day.

—PRESBYTER.

New Initiation Ceremony for Rover Scouts.

The Chief Scout, Sir Robert Baden Powell, has drawn up a form of investiture based on the initiation ceremony of ancient knights, for the enrolment ceremony of Rover Scouts. The investiture includes questions similar to those put to knights in the days of old, and picturesque and symbolic ceremonies.

The candidate has to keep a lone vigil in some quiet spot in the open, or in a chapel, where he is guarded from interruption by his sponsors. During this vigil he must ask himself whether he has any doubt about continuing the ceremony, and such questions as, "Am I absolutely honourable, trustworthy, and truthful?" "What are my bad points?" "Have I pluck and patience to stick it when things are against me?" and "Am I strong minded enough to keep off temptations—to drink, to harm a girl or a woman?"

After the vigil the candidate is brought before the Rover Leader at a table covered with St. George's Cross, upon which is set an ewer of water, a basin, and a napkin. The Rover Leader says, "In ancient times it was the custom of those about to become Knights to be laved with water, in token of the washing away of past misdeeds, and as a sign that they were determined to commence afresh with a clean page. Are you willing to give such a sign?" The candidate says "I am," and then places his hands together over the basin. The sponsor takes the ewer and pours water over them, while the other takes the napkin and dries the candidate's hands. The ceremony concludes with the Rover Leader taking the new Rover Leader by the left hand and giving him a buffet on the left shoulder.

The Eternal Now.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."
Irrevocable? No! God hath decreed
No part which naught can change. Shall we not find
When we have reached life's goal and touched His mind,
One all-eternal Now—at once the seed
And fruit of time? From all remorse then freed,
And all regrets, we'll learn that nought can bind
The eternal spark; though here its powers, assigned
By God Himself, to pain and grief may lead.
The part runs counter to the whole, and "sin"
Bears sorrow's fruit. Yet shall no pang remain,
Nor scar, when we that great reunion win;
For them we shall renew the past again,—
Re-write its scroll, life's very threads re-spin,
And weave to God's design this tangled skein.

D. H. S.

Reports.

Antrim.—The Annual Meeting of the Congregation was held on Sunday, April 15th in the Vestry after Divine Service. The Minister, Rev. George V. Crook in the chair. There has been much sickness during the year, but fortunately we have had no deaths among our members to record. The financial anxiety in such a small congregation has been very severe, but all those present promised to do their best. It was unanimously passed that Miss Smith be our treasurer for the ensuing year which she accepted, and to be our representative.

* *

Ballycarry.—The Congregation of Ballycarry has sustained a great loss by the death of Mr. James M'Kee, second son of Mr. and Mrs. John M'Kee, who died as the result of a motor-cycle accident. Mr. James M'Kee was only 20 years of age, of a bright and happy disposition, taking a great interest in the work of his church. He was a member of the choir, scarcely ever missing a Sunday, and a collector of stipends. His death has been a sad blow to all the Congregation, and we shall miss him very greatly from his place in the church. Our deepest sympathy is extended to the bereaved parents and family. At the funeral there was a very large concourse of people, and many beautiful wreaths were sent among which was one from the choir and the members of the Ballycarry Church.

The Ballycarry Congregation has also sustained a loss in the death of Mr. John

Connor, aged 67, a lifelong member of the Church. Mr. Connor went to Belfast at the age of sixteen, joining the firm of Messrs. Dunville. He rapidly gained promotion by his industry, loyalty and strength of character and for more than thirty years was the valued representative of the firm for Lancashire and Yorkshire. His remains were brought over from his late residence in Manchester, where he spent the latter years of his life. He was unmarried but his interest in the friends of his youth did not abate. He maintained his connection with his Church and ministers up to the last.

* *

Ballyhemlin.—Mr. Eric Barron, son of the Rev. John Barron, has been appointed to the command of the ship, on which for the last few years, he has been first-mate. "The Iron Chief" works along the Australian coast.

* *

Downpatrick.—The annual soiree of the First Presbyterian Non-subscribing Church came off with eclat in the Assembly Hall on Thursday evening. After grace by the minister, Rev. Victor A. Callow, a company of nearly 300 had tea, dispensed by a band of helpful people of the congregation. Almost on time, 8 o'clock, Miss Marie Henry, with a charming pianoforte solo, began a very enjoyable programme, skilfully organised by Miss Jordan. Songs were tastefully rendered by Rev. J. D. Davies, Mr. T. W. Fairley, Mrs. M'Mechan, and Miss Jeanie Quinn ; a duet by Misses M. and A. Dickson ; and Mr. Hatch, of Belfast, awoke enthusiasm with his medleys and burlesques. The dancing of the younger generation, Miss Oriel Pyper and Miss Belle Gibson, was a treat, and Misses A. and D. Hughes in 'Mynheer and his Dutch Lady' fairly took the house by storm. Accompanists, Mrs. T. Corry, Misses A. Dickson and P. Moore. Sunday-school prizes in the shape of books were presented by Mr. Callow. Votes of thanks to the tea-makers, artistes, organiser of the programme, and all who assisted in making the event a success were proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr. C. Stewart. The singing of the National Anthem brought the proceedings to a close.

* *

First Presbyterian Church, Belfast.—The Antrim Presbytery have fixed the date for the installation of Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A., to the pastorate of the Church on Thursday, 21st June at 11-30. Will members please make a note of the date as a good attendance is particularly requested? There will be a Congregational Reception in the Central Hall on the evening of that date and the Committee hope that our members will turn up in force and give a warm welcome to our new minister. Mr. Cross will commence his ministry on Sunday, June 24th.

* *

Stanhope Street, Belfast.—A Quarterly meeting of the Ulster District branch of the British League of Unitarian and other Liberal Christian Women (with which the Annual Meeting of that Association was incorporated) was held at the Domestic Mission, Stanhope Street, Belfast, on Tuesday, 24th April. The service was conducted by Mrs. Glynne Davies. After the service the Annual Meeting was held. The retiring president, Miss Eileen Andrews, took the chair. Mrs. E. R. Jackson, of Mountpottinger, proposed the election of Miss Armstrong of First Church, Rosemary Street, as the new president. Mrs. Glynne Davies seconded the motion and this being passed Miss Armstrong then took the chair. Mrs. E. R. Jackson was elected vice-president and Miss Eileen Andrews was appointed hon. secretary and treasurer. The Secretary's report gave the very satisfactory news that the number of branches had doubled during the year. There are now branches of the League at Ballycarry, Ballyclare, Banbridge, Belfast (First Church Rosemary Street) Clough-Comber, Dromore, Larne, Mountpottinger, and Stanhope Street, Belfast. The treasurer's statement of accounts showed that the income had almost covered the expenses and the small deficiency was made good at the meeting. Mrs. E. R. Jackson, the publication's secretary, gave a satisfactory repor of the sale and distribution of literature in connection with the League. The evening concluded with tea and a programme of elocutionary items kindly arranged for by Mrs. E. R. Jackson.

* *

Templepatrick Presbytery.—A meeting of the above Presbytery was held in the old Presbyterian Meeting-house, Glenarm, on Tuesday, 24th April, at 3 p.m. Considering the fact that this is a busy time with farmers and others, there was a gratifying attendance of over 40 people. This included all the ministers in the Presbytery, three of their wives, and three lay representatives. There were also present ten Sunday School Scholars, and five ladies not of our religious

communion. The proceedings commenced with a short service conducted by the Moderator, the Rev. Felix Holt, B.A., of Bally-, money, who subsequently presided at the meeting for business. The Presbytery having concluded its deliberations, all present were invited to partake of tea in the room adjoining the Church ere separating. the Rev. S. E. Bowen proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the members of the Glenarm Congregation for their generous hospitality. This was seconded by the Rev. A. Turner, and supported by the Moderator and Clerk. The Rev. J. A. Miskimmin, B.A., and Mr. James Galbraith replied in suitable terms. Our best thanks are tendered to the ladies and young men for their invaluable service, and to all who sent useful and valuable contributions which were highly appreciated. Our thanks are also due to Miss Eva M'Mullan, Glenarm, for her kindness in coming all the way from Belfast to preside at the organ. The present writer is of opinion that it would be better to take up such matters as holding an annual meeting of the congregation, and a written or printed statement of accounts, instead of some of the questions discussed at the meeting of Presbytery. A recommendation from Presbytery might have some effect.

* *

Templepatrick United Service.—Sunday 20th May was a memorable day for our Congregation here in Templepatrick for on that day under the auspices of the Presbytery of Templepatrick and the congregations of Antrim and Ballyclare a united service was held which will for many a day to come hold an affectionate place in our memories. The day was fine although at times very cold. Even so, a large congregation assembled, composed of friends from far-a-way places in the two counties of Antrim and Down, and filled the beautiful old meeting house to its capacity. The preacher for the occasion was the Moderator, the Rev. D. J. Williams of Killinchy and he was assisted in the conduct of the service by the *pastor loci*, Rev. A. Turner. The discourse was based on Matthew xxiv. 42, and Thess. v. 3. He indicated that "the texts contain a solemn warning as to the nature of the religious life: that it is a life of devotion to the h ghest type of human excellence, that spiritual aspiration is something more than ordinary good behaviour, in fact that it involves an alertness and a self-discipline capable of meeting the events and circumstances, the conditions of crucial tests with which human paths are plentifully strewn. Tests of this nature can neither surprise nor disconcert pilgrims on their journey through the world's rough places, if the flame of religion burns in their breasts and the lamp of faith illumines their path. The world is disappointing and joyless enough if the wayfarer has not the guidance of personal religion, and the love of God and man making glad music in his heart through the devious ways of this world." The quiet earnest manner of the preacher claimed the closest attention of the congregation from beginning to end of the discourse and it was good and timely for us to hear the great truth so sympathetically placed before us that only in the religious life was the best life capable of realisation. It was indeed, helpful to sit there in that old historic place of worship with the sunshine streaming through its beautiful windows and hear those quiet but forceful words calling to higher and better standards of life. It was indeed good to be there. Miss Getty presided at the organ and the congregational singing was in itself a source of inspiration not soon to lose its influence. Mrs. Moore, A.L.C.M. sang two solos, "Nearer my God to Thee," and "Beyond the Dawn." Mrs. Moore has sung for us on previous occasions, but never with greater sympathy and appeal than on this day. We felt that the spiritual things were with us in the beautiful rendering of her songs. At the close of the service the whole congregation was invited to tea in the War Memorial Hall. So far as could be seen the invitation was generally accepted, and a large company met together for refreshment and conversation. It was cheery to see friends who had come together from north and south, from east and west, over a cup of tea striving to get as much said as possible within the short time at their disposal. It was an occasion when many friends met again and renewed acquaintance. The ladies of the Templepatrick congregatiot provided the tea and under the able leadership of Mrs. Hugh Lyle did their very best to meet the requirements of the occasion. And then our visitors by bus and motor began to leave in homeward directions until at last only a few of our own were left to say to each other how good it had all been.

* *

The Women's League.—First House Branch. There was a good and representative attendance at the Annual Meeting held in the Central Hall on the evening of

2nd May. The Meeting started, as usual, with prayer and the reading of the Declaration of Unitarian Principles after which, as there was no special speaker, an article entitled the History of Unitarianism, by the Rev. Brooke Herford, was read by the President. Then followed the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, both of which were considered very satisfactory. Owing principally to holding the meetings alternately in afternoon and evening, the membership had rather more than doubled in the past year. An interesting series of meetings had been held with such speakers as Mrs. Blake Odgers, J.P., Rev. Townsend, Mrs. Eustace Thompson, Mrs. Glynne Davies, Mrs. Jackson and Miss Florence Irwin. In December a Cafe Chantant was held which realised nearly £35, and out of this cheques for 5 guineas were sent to each of the following—the Belfast Children's Hospital, the Maternity and the Samaritan Hospital and the Domestic Mission, the balance being retained for League expenses. In addition, the sum of £15, part of the proceeds of the Sale in April, 1927, was donated towards Church expenses—£2 2s. to the Rev. Agnew Fund and £1 to help an English fellow-Leaguer who was in Belfast and ill. The financial year ends with a balance in hand sufficient to carry on the League's activities for some time. A New Year's party was given in January to which all the Branches, then in existence, were invited, and this Branch was in turn, entertained at Comber, Larne and Mountpottinger. The office-bearers were re-elected as follows : President —Miss Armstrong ; Hon. Sec.—Miss E. L. Ritchie ; Hon. Treas.—Miss Laird, and Chairman of Needlework Section—Mrs. Hill. In addition, it was decided to have a Refreshment Section, and Mrs. Boyd was elected chief of this. A very hearty vote of thanks, proposed by Mrs. Newman, and seconded and supported—was accorded to Miss Ritchie and Miss Laird for their faithful services since the inauguration of the League in Belfast.

* *

York Street.—The ministers of the Presbyteries of Antrim and Bangor are continuing the services during Mr. Agnew's absence. The attendances continue to be excellent and there has been no falling away which is a source of pride to all concerned. The Guild, having had a most successful season concluded its activities by an enjoyable social held on Saturday, May 12th. The Guild Committee deserve much thanks for the gallant way in which they have carried on, in Mr. Agnew's absence. The congregation were delighted to hear that a cheque for £25 had been received by their minister from the members of the Church of the Messiah, Montreal, Canada, to use as he may think fit to establish some visible token in York Street of the existence and friendship of our churches across the Atlantic The first minister of our Church in Montreal was ordained in York Street, before he proceeded to take up duty there and members of York Street, eighty years ago subscribed generously to the then struggling congregation. Now the church of the Messiah has reached out its hand to help York Street in its own day of difficulty. The gift is thus very fitting, and it is fitting also that in a church which is sending out a regular stream of young people to Canada, the existence of friendly churches there should be before their eyes and those of our many visitors who sometimes have little idea of the extent of our Free Faith. The scheme to have some such memorial in York Street, has long been in the mind of our minister and others, and with other gifts from overseas we can rely on it being worthily carried out when Mr. Agnew is able to return to us. We are glad to be able to report that he is making progress, though slowly.

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